REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 to 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Kosik et al. (US 5,700,227). Claims 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Sasa (US 5,020,645).

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. 102 Rejections

Claims 1 to 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Kosik et al. (US 5,700,227). Claims 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Sasa (US 5,020,645).

Kosik shows an automatic clutch control where automatic clutch is controlled so that the drive torque is reduced linearly as a brake pedal is actuated. A vehicle speed is monitored by sensor 11 to determine if a creep mode is present (See Col. 4, line 7 to 10).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitation of claim 7 and to clarify that the present invention includes the step of "controlling the creep parameter when the brake actuating element is increasingly actuated so that the creep is reduced, the creep parameter being a speed of the vehicle."

As discussed in the present application at [0024], it is particularly advantageous if the vehicle speed itself is controlled as the creep parameter. The vehicle speed thus can be reduced in a controlled fashion without controlling the torque values. See also the advantages discussed at [0029] to [0034].

Kosik controls the automatic clutch as a function of torque, and does not control the speed of the vehicle "when the brake actuating element is increasingly actuated so that the creep is reduced" as now claimed.

Withdrawal of the 102 rejections is respectfully requested.

With further respect to dependent claim 10, it is respectfully submitted that Kosik does not show that "the first sensor detects a rotational speed of an input shaft of a transmission situated downstream from the clutch in order to detect the vehicle speed." The speed sensor 11 of Kosik is at an output shaft of the transmission, not at the input shaft.

The advantages of measuring the input shaft instead of the output shaft are discussed at [0024] for example.

Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 10 for this reason as well is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New claims 11 to 17 have been submitted. Support is found at [0024], [0029] and [0030] for example, where the vehicle speed setpoint is discussed. Neither Kosik nor Sasa shows these features.

CONCLUSION

The present application is respectfully submitted as being in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

Respectfully submitted,
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